

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 157722 TOSEC 050129

62

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S/S - MR. BORG

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 157722 TOSEC 050129

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: APER

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTMENT.

TO THE SECRETARY FROM INGERSOLL

1. LARRY, CAROL AND I HAVE REVIEWED THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE NOW-VACANT POST OF AMBASSADOR TO ZAIRE, AND RECOMMEND THREE FSO-1'S IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION. THEY ARE TALCOTT SEELYE (AMBASSADOR TO TUNIS), GALEN STONE (AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO LAOS), AND ED MULCAHY (DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY AF).

2. IN OUR OPINION, THEY ARE ALL TOUGH-MINDED OFFICERS WHO CAN WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH THE ZAIRE REGIME. EACH OF THEM CAN BE FORCEFUL AND PERSISTENT WITHOUT OFFENDING LOCAL SENSIBILITIES, HAS THE SENSE OF HUMOR AND PERSPECTIVE NEEDED TO COPE WITH THE INEVITABLE FRUSTRATIONS HE WILL
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 157722 TOSEC 050129

BE FACED WITH, AND POSSESSES THE JUDGMENT TO KNOW WHEN TO

BE FIRM AND WHEN TO BACK OFF. EACH SPEAKS FLUENT FRENCH.

3. SEELYE HAS BEEN IN TUNIS SINCE SEPTEMBER 1972. HIS CAREER HAS BEEN ALMOST TOTALLY CONCENTRATED ON ARAB WORLD AFFAIRS, BOTH IN THE FIELD--AMMAN, KUWAIT, JIDDA, WHERE HE SERVED AS DCM (1965-68)--AND IN THE DEPARTMENT. HE HAS

ESTABLISHED EFFECTIVE RELATIONS WITH THE MERCURIAL PRESIDENT, HABIB BOURGUIBA, AND HAS SHOWN PARTICULAR ADEPTNESS IN WORKING IN A THIRD WORLD COUNTRY WHERE THE LEADERSHIP IS UNDER PRESSURE FROM RADICAL ELEMENTS. A HARD WORKER HIMSELF, HE RUNS A TIGHT AND EFFICIENT SHIP. IN AN EARLIER INCARNATION HE WAS ADVISER TO BUNKER ON THE YEMEN DISPUTE BETWEEN NASSER AND FAISAL. ACCORDING TO EILTS THIS RULES HIM OUT FOR SAUDI ARABIA, BUT EILTS, ATHERTON, AND BUNKER GIVE HIM HIGH MARKS ON INTELLIGENCE, TOUGHNESS, AND DIPLOMATIC SKILL. HE HAS TESTED 4 /4 FRENCH. MOVING HIM WOULD OPEN TUNIS FOR JOHN DEAN.

4. STONE HAS JUST BEEN NAMED TO LAOS, AND THE SITUATION THERE WOULD NEED TO BE CLARIFIED BEFORE HE COULD BE DESIGNATED FOR ANOTHER POST. HOWEVER, ASSUMING THAT IT IS UNLIKELY HE WILL GO TO LAOS, HE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A POSSIBILITY FOR ZAIRE. HE IS AN OUTSTANDING EXECUTIVE, AND HAS THE REPUTATION IN THE SERVICE OF BEING VERSATILE AND ABLE TO TACKLE ALMOST ANY MISSION ASSIGNMENT COMPETENTLY. HE IS STRONGER IN EXECUTIVE AND DIPLOMATIC SKILLS THAN IN POLITICAL POLICY MATTERS. HE WAS SUCCESSFUL IN DEVELOPING EXCELLENT INTER-PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS DURING HIS ASSIGNMENTS AS DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION IN NEW DELHI (1969-73) AND DCM PARIS (1973-75). HE HAS TESTED 4 /4 FRENCH.

5. MULCAHY IS ONE OF THE MOST EXPERIENCED AFRICANISTS IN THE SERVICE, HAVING SPENT 18 OF HIS 28 YEARS IN THE SERVICE WORKING ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS BOTH IN THE FIELD AND IN THE DEPARTMENT. HE WAS DCM TUNIS (1967-70), DCM LAGOS (1970-72), AND AMBASSADOR TO CHAD (1972-74). WHILE HE HAS THE TEMPERAMENT TO DEAL WITH THE PRESIDENT AND IS CONSIDERED TO BE A TENACIOUS BUT TACTFUL NEGOTIATOR, WE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 157722 TOSEC 050129

HAVE SOME QUESTION ABOUT HIS ABILITY TO DIRECT SUCH A LARGE MISSION EFFECTIVELY. HIS FRENCH HAS BEEN TESTED AT 3 /3 .

6. WE HAVE DISCUSSED THESE NAMES WITH SHELDON VANCE. HE KNOWS STONE AND MULCAHY AND BELIEVES EITHER WOULD BE A GOOD CHOICE HE DOES NOT KNOW SEELVE BUT AFTER RE VIEWING FILES AGREES THAT HE IS A GOOD CANDIDATE INGERSOLL

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